In such a society the place of the middleman has been important. A neighbor or a group of neighbors may tender their good offices in adjusting a quarrel in which each antagonist would be sacrificing his face by taking the first step in approaching the other. The wise intermediary can effect the reconciliation while preserving the dignity of both.

It is obvious, too, that compromise must be a major feature of the social relations of such a people. In any dispute the reputations of both parties must, if possible, be preserved. Public opinion would regard unkindly a contestant who caused an adversary too great loss of face. To bring a difference into court would prove expensive and might be ruinous to both litigants. If possible, then, a settlement must be reached by private, extra-legal means. Several peacemakers may offer their services and the final adjustment will probably be a modification of the original demands, with some reward, possibly in the form of a feast, for the middleman at the expense of one of the parties.

The regard for face may be responsible for the dislike of the Chinese for the use of physical violence. Such violence is by no means unknown (for instance, hospitals continually get cases of knife-wounds inflicted in personal encounters), but it has not been held in the honor that it has in some countries of the Occident. Dueling has not been a polite art. Boxing and fencing exist, but rather as forms of physical exercise for one person and as gymnastic exhibitions than real fighting. A man gives great offence by laying hold on another with the object of exerting force. Two members of the lower classes may revile each other, publicly, for half an hour or more, and even spit on each other, and yet without coming to blows.

While the Chinese regard the use of physical violence in a quarrel as a breach of good breeding, they think of suicide as an honorable means of protest. By committing suicide an aggrieved party can bring opprobrium upon his enemy and cause the latter costly embarrassment with officials and neighbors.

Dignity has been regarded as one of the marks of a gentleman. Rapid walking, loud talking, and violently abusive language have been thought of as derogatory to it. A Chinese may be bland and affable even to a person whom he heartily dislikes, and it is often difficult to know from his calm or even genial exterior what are his